

## Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

### Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A carrier that can be loaded with an aqueous media comprises a plurality of, ~~in the form of~~ particles, ~~that can be loaded with aqueous media,~~ the particles being made of a porous hydrophobic polymer substrate, whereby the particles have a mean particle size between 50  $\mu\text{m}$  and 5000  $\mu\text{m}$  and an at least partly open-pore structure with a mean pore diameter between 1  $\mu\text{m}$  and 200  $\mu\text{m}$ , and whereby the particulate carrier has a loadability with water, determined by bringing it into contact with water, of 10 wt.% to 95 wt.% relative to the total weight of the loaded carrier.

2. (currently amended) The carrier ~~Carrier~~ according to Claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ whereby the porous polymer substrate is hydrophilised over least part of its entire surface, the entire surface comprising the outer surfaces and the surface of its pores.

3. (currently amended) The carrier ~~Carrier~~ according to ~~one or both of Claims 1 and 2~~ Claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ whereby the porous polymer substrate is hydrophilised over

essentially its entire surface, the entire surface comprising the outer surfaces and the surface of its pores.

4. (currently amended) The carrier ~~Carrier~~ according to ~~one or both of Claims 2 and 3~~ Claim 2, ~~characterised in that~~ whereby the porous polymer substrate is hydrophilised by coating with a surfactant.

5. (currently amended) The carrier ~~Carrier~~ according to Claim 4, ~~characterised in that~~ whereby the surfactant is a non-ionic surfactant ~~chosen~~ selected from the group consisting of fatty acid glycerides, polyglycol ethers, fatty acid glycol esters, fatty acid mono-, di- or triesters of sorbitan, and fatty acid amides.

6. (currently amended) The carrier ~~Carrier~~ according to Claim 5, ~~characterised in that~~ whereby the non-ionic surfactant is a fatty acid glyceride.

7. (currently amended) The carrier ~~Carrier~~ according to Claim 5, ~~characterised in that~~ whereby the non-ionic surfactant has an HLB value higher than 7.

8. (currently amended) The carrier ~~Carrier~~ according to Claim 5, ~~characterised in that~~ whereby the non-ionic surfactant has an HLB value of 10 to 15.

9. (currently amended) The carrier ~~Carrier~~ according to Claim 4, ~~characterised in that~~ whereby the surfactant is an anionic surfactant selected from the group of soaps, alkyl sulfates, alkane sulfonates, alkyl aryl sulfonates or alkyl benzene sulfonates,  $\alpha$ -olefin sulfonates, fatty alcohol sulfonates, fatty alcohol ether sulfonates and dialkyl sulfosuccinates.

10. (currently amended) The carrier ~~Carrier~~ according to Claim 4, ~~characterised in that~~ whereby the surfactant is a cationic surfactant selected from the group of quaternary ammonium compounds.

11. (currently amended) The carrier ~~Carrier~~ according to ~~one or more of Claims 4 to 10~~ Claim 4, ~~characterised in that~~ whereby ~~the concentration of~~ the surfactant in the carrier ~~lies~~ has a concentration between 0.1 wt.% and 15 wt.% relative to the weight of the carrier.

12. (currently amended) The carrier ~~Carrier~~ according to ~~one or more of Claims 1 to 11~~ Claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ whereby the polymer of which the polymer substrate is ~~made is~~ selected from the group consisting of a polyolefin, a fluoropolymer, a styrene polymer, or a copolymer of these polymers.

13. (currently amended) The carrier ~~Carrier~~ according to ~~one or more of Claims 1 to 12~~ Claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ whereby it the carrier possesses essentially the same porous configuration as the porous polymer substrate.

14. (currently amended) The carrier ~~Carrier~~ according to ~~one or more of Claims 1 to 13~~ Claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ whereby the carrier has a porosity ~~lies~~ in the range between 30 vol.% and 90 vol.%, and the loadability with water between 25 wt.% and 90 wt.% relative to the total weight of the loaded carrier.

15. (currently amended) The carrier ~~Carrier~~ according to ~~one or more of Claims 1 to 14~~ Claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ whereby the particles have a mean pore diameter in the range between 5  $\mu\text{m}$  and 100  $\mu\text{m}$ .

16. (currently amended) The carrier ~~Carrier~~ according to ~~one or more of Claims 1 to 15~~ Claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ whereby it the carrier has a characteristic loading time for water of 120 minutes at most.

17. (currently amended) The carrier ~~Carrier~~ according to ~~one or more of Claims 1 to 15~~ Claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~

whereby ~~it~~ the carrier has a characteristic loading time for water of 90 minutes at most.

18. (currently amended) ~~Method~~ A method for production of a carrier loadable with aqueous media and in ~~the~~ a form of particles based on a hydrophobic polymer, the carrier having a loadability with water, as determined by bringing ~~it~~ the carrier into contact with water, of 10 wt.% to 95 wt.% relative to the total weight of the loaded carrier, comprising the steps of:

- ~~selection of~~ selecting a porous hydrophobic polymer substrate in the form of particles, the polymer substrate having a mean particle size between 50  $\mu\text{m}$  and 5000  $\mu\text{m}$  and an at least partly open-pore structure with a mean pore diameter between 1  $\mu\text{m}$  and 200  $\mu\text{m}$ ;
- ~~hydrophilisation of~~ hydrophilising the particulate polymer substrate over at least part of its total surface, the total surface comprising the outer surface and the surface of its pores, to obtain the carrier loadable with aqueous media.

19. (currently amended) ~~Method~~ The method according to Claim 18, ~~characterised in that~~ whereby the carrier loadable with aqueous media possesses essentially the same porous configuration as the hydrophobic polymer substrate.

20. (currently amended) ~~Method~~ The method according to Claim 18 ~~or 19, characterised in that~~ whereby the polymer substrate for hydrophilisation is impregnated over at least part of its total surface, the total surface comprising the outer surface and the surface of its pores, with a solution of a surfactant in a volatile solvent or solvent mixture that is essentially inert to the polymer substrate and does not dissolve ~~it~~ the polymer substrate to any significant extent.

21. (currently amended) ~~Method~~ The method according to Claim 20, ~~characterised in that~~ whereby the solvent or solvent mixture has a boiling point not exceeding 100°C.

22. (currently amended) ~~Method~~ The method according to ~~one or both of Claims 20 and 21~~ Claim 20, ~~characterised in that~~ whereby an organic solvent or solvent mixture is used as the solvent or solvent mixture.

23. (currently amended) ~~Method~~ The method according to Claim 22, ~~characterised in that~~ whereby the solvent or solvent mixture is selected from the group consisting of alcohols, ketones and esters.

24. (currently amended) ~~Method~~ The method according to ~~one or more of Claims 20 to 23~~ Claim 20, ~~characterised in that~~ whereby the surfactant being a non-ionic surfactant selected

from the group of fatty acid glycerides is used for the hydrophilisation.

25. (currently amended) ~~Method~~ The method according to ~~one or both of Claims 20 and 21~~ Claim 20, characterised in ~~that water is used as the solvent~~ whereby the solvent is water.

26. (currently amended) ~~Method~~ The method according to Claim 25, ~~characterised in that~~ whereby the solvent is a water-soluble, non-ionic surfactant with an HLB value higher than 7 ~~is used as the surfactant~~.

27. (currently amended) ~~Method~~ The method according to ~~one or more of Claims 20 to 26~~ Claim 20, characterised in that ~~the concentration of~~ whereby the surfactant in the solution ~~is~~ has a concentration between 1 wt.% and 10 wt.%.

28. (currently amended) ~~Method~~ The method according to ~~one or more of Claims 18 to 27~~ Claim 18, characterised in that whereby the polymer substrate is made from a polymer selected from the group consisting of polyolefin, a fluoropolymer, a styrene polymer, or a copolymer of these polymers.

29. (currently amended) ~~Method~~ The method according to ~~one or more of Claims 18 to 28~~ Claim 18, characterised in that

whereby the polymer substrate has a mean pore diameter in the range between 5  $\mu\text{m}$  and 100  $\mu\text{m}$ .

30. (currently amended) ~~Method~~ The method according to ~~one or more of Claims 18 to 29~~ Claim 18, ~~characterised in that~~ whereby the polymer substrate has a volume porosity between 30 vol.% and 90 vol.%.

31. (currently amended) Method for production of a storage device loaded with an aqueous medium and based on a hydrophobic polymer, comprising ~~at least~~ the steps of:

- ~~selection of~~ selecting a porous hydrophobic polymer substrate in the form of particles, the polymer substrate having a mean particle size between 50  $\mu\text{m}$  and 5000  $\mu\text{m}$  and an at least partly open-pore structure with a mean pore diameter between 1  $\mu\text{m}$  and 200  $\mu\text{m}$ ,
- ~~hydrophilisation of~~ hydrophilising the particulate polymer substrate over at least part of its total surface, the total surface comprising the outer surface and the surface of its pores, and
- loading ~~of~~ the hydrophilised particulate polymer substrate with the aqueous medium to the extent of 10 wt.% to 95 wt.% relative to the total weight of the loaded storage device, by bringing the hydrophilised polymer substrate into contact with the aqueous medium.



32. (currently amended) ~~Method~~ A method for producing a storage device loaded with an aqueous medium and based on a hydrophobic polymer, comprising ~~at least~~ the steps of:

- ~~selection of~~ selecting a porous hydrophobic polymer substrate in the form of particles, the polymer substrate having a mean particle size between 50  $\mu\text{m}$  and 5000  $\mu\text{m}$  and an at least partly open-pore structure with a mean pore diameter between 1  $\mu\text{m}$  and 200  $\mu\text{m}$ ;
- directly loading ~~of~~ the hydrophobic polymer substrate with the aqueous medium to the extent of 10 wt.% to 95 wt.% relative to the total weight of the loaded storage device, by bringing the hydrophobic polymer substrate into contact with the aqueous medium, the latter containing a water-soluble surfactant.

33. (currently amended) ~~Storage~~ A storage device consisting of particles ~~and~~ loaded with an aqueous medium to the extent of 10 wt.% to 95 wt.% relative to the total weight of the loaded storage device, whereby the particles are made from a hydrophobic polymer substrate, have a mean particle size between 50  $\mu\text{m}$  and 5000  $\mu\text{m}$ , and possess an at least partly open-pore structure and a mean pore diameter between 1  $\mu\text{m}$  and 200  $\mu\text{m}$ .